**Ishmael** Typically represents the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, in contrast to Isaac, the seed according to the covenant of promise.

**Isles** As there are no islands nearer to Israel than Cyprus, the term ‘the isles’ is thought to refer indefinitely to places or nations far off.

**Israel** Name given to Jacob after he had been crippled when wrestling with ‘a man’, signifying ‘Prince of God’ and indicating the way of blessing for the nation of promise. Thereafter the patriarch nearly always continued to be called Jacob, although his descendants are invariably called the children of Israel. At the division under Rehoboam, the difference between “Israel” and “Judah”, which had been submerged since David’s day, surfaced and the Northern kingdom of the ten tribes was called Israel while the Southern of the two tribes, was called Judah. After the captivity, however, the returning remnant was called Israel, continuing to the Lord’s time on earth.

**Jasper** Scriptural jasper is not considered to be the same as the modern, but may mean diamond. It symbolises that aspect of the glory of God, which can be communicated.

**Jezebel** Wife of Ahab, king of Israel, a bold wicked idolatress who greatly encouraged her husband in evil. In the N.T. her name is used to symbolise an evil seducing system in the professing church that leads others into idolatrous associations.

**Job** The ‘perfect and upright man’ whose history is given in the book of Job. He is twice mentioned in Ezekiel along with Noah and Daniel as a standard of righteousness; and in James as an example of endurance.

**Jordan** River forming the Eastern border of Israel. Being the last obstacle to entry into the land, it is a figure of the entrance, while on earth, through death with Christ to the heavenly portion of the Christian.

**Jubilee** The fiftieth year, coming at the end of every seventh sabbatical year, during which no sowing or reaping was to be done. It is clearly a type of the millennium.

#### Key Symbolises authority to open or shut.

**Kingdom** Not to be confused with the professing church, although apparently similar. The kingdom is the sphere of Christ’s rule, while the church is the dwelling place of God by the Spirit. The kingdom will continue during the millennium, the Christian sharing the privileges of both now, as well as the responsibilities of the kingdom. The Christian’s place in heaven is by grace apart from works, but his reward in the kingdom during the millennium will be according to his faithfulness to his Lord now.

**Kohathites** Descendants of Kohath, who was a son of Levi and grandfather of Moses and Aaron. They carried the ‘most holy things’ of the tabernacle. In brethren’s language “Levitical service” in the sense of ministering at fellowship meetings is more properly Kohathite service in contrast to “Gershonite” or “Merarite” service. (see separate entries)

#### Lamp Used symbolically for the light obtained from it.

#### Lawyer A teacher of the Mosaic law, or one who expounded the law - not quite the same as a lawyer today, who corresponds more to an advocate in Scripture.

#### Leah As Jacob’s wife, not as beautiful as Rachel, represents the church as the fruitful counterpart of Christ, Rachel representing Israel as the first love, but unfruitful.

**Leaven** An old word for yeast, as used in the raising or fermentation of bread. Because of its hidden effect in “puffing up”, symbolises the human element in the things of God, and hence evil. It was therefore forbidden to be offered in any offering by fire, because of this evil connection. Unleavened bread, in practice somewhat resembling water biscuits or cream crackers, had also to be eaten with certain offerings, a symbol that evil must be kept away in order to keep the feast.

#### Lees The sediment including dead yeast cells left when wine stops fermenting and matures. ’Wines on the lees’ or ‘settled on the lees’ is a significant type of apathetic persons in the world, or of the self-satisfied and unconcerned spirit of Christendom.

#### Leprosy A loathsome and formerly incurable disease resulting in wasting away and dropping off of limbs, and ultimately death. An apt type of sin, and its insidious working, producing an unclean condition.

**Light** Besides physical light, the term is frequently used in a moral sense. Light from God is His word revealing Himself, and “God is Light”. Being invisible in itself, it yet manifests everything, and in this, is appropriately descriptive of God.

#### Linen Several Hebrew and Greek words translated ‘linen’ are used for fine white textiles, which could be cotton or linen. Because of the reference in Rev. 19:8, signifies righteousness or purity.

**Living Creatures** These in Ezekiel point symbolically to the attributes of God in connection with His throne, and His acting on earth in His judicial government and providence. Some particular animals used symbolically are given below:

*Ass* Man’s nature, as wild and seldom tamed.

*Bear* Standard of ferocity, when robbed of whelps

*Behemoth* A Hebrew word thought formerly to refer to the hippopotamus, but uncertain. More modern commentators have suggested the brontosaurus, which more nearly fits the description in Job, in that its tail is much more like a cedar than the hippo’s. An illustration to Job of the wisdom and power of its Creator.

*Birds(undefined)*Agents of evil.

*Dog* Those cut off and unclean. In our day dogs are domestic pets, but in scripture they are always regarded negatively, probably because of the natural animal’s habit of scavenging refuse.

*Dove* Peace, harmlessness.

*Eagle* Swiftness of execution. From scriptural descriptions of habits it is thought the Griffon vulture is the creature referred to.

##### Fish Has been called God’s especial gift to man, as any one may catch it, and it increases abundantly without husbandry.

*Frog* Because of their practice of grovelling in the mire, and noisy activity in the night, frogs symbolise unclean spirits or emissaries of Satan.

*Goat* Regarded as clean in the Levitical law, and used regularly in sacrifices as an alternative to sheep. In Daniel’s prophecy, symbolizes Greece under Alexander in its ability to rapidly cover rough ground, being a sure-footed animal. In the N.T. parable, goats represent the lost in contrast to the sheep, representing the saved.

*Horse* Careering imperial power

*Lamb* Meek submissiveness

*Leech* Rapacious person.

*Leopard* Suddenly acting bloodthirsty over-powering animal, as Alexander the Great in his conquests.

#### *Leviathan* Hebrew word signifying any great sea or land monster: the description in Job agrees with what is known of the crocodile. Its hunting technique makes it an apt symbol of the enemy of God’s people. Called the ‘King of Beasts’ in Job.

*Lion* Strength

## *Man* Intelligence

*Ox* Plodding endurance

*Raven* The word in scripture is thought to refer to any member of the crow family. Because of their aggressive and carrion eating habits, defined as unclean, and generally represent natural men with degraded taste, in contrast to doves which are peaceful and plant eating.

## *Sheep* Mankind as prone to wander

*Swine* Defilement and degradation

**Levites** Typical of Christians generally, who are redeemed, cleansed, and consecrated to the service of the Lord, having no inheritance on earth. In modern brethren’s language, often restricted to those who ‘take fellowship meetings’, but this is not wholly accurate - see entries for Gershonites, Kohathites, and Merarites.

**Libation** Old word meaning drink offering

**Malefactor** Obsolete word for an evil-doer or criminal

**Manna** The name signifies ‘What is it?’ It was described as being like coriander seed, the colour of bdellium, and tasted initially like wafers with honey, but when the Israelites had lost their relish for it, like fresh oil. It typifies Christ as the heavenly One in the midst of earthly circumstances.

**Meat** Several Hebrew and Greek words are translated meat, but the general meaning is food of any sort, not necessarily flesh.

**Merarites** Descendants of Merari the third son of Levi, who moved the heavier parts of the tabernacle, for which they used four wagons and eight oxen: later they shared Levitical duties such as the singers and doorkeepers. Applied as service rendered in for instance revision and distribution of ministry.

**Mirror** In Old Testament times, a plate of polished bronze, not silvered glass as modern mirrors. See under glass.

**Moab, Moabites** Descendants of Lot and his eldest daughter, and therefore

related to the Israelites. Their idolatry is denounced by God as an abomination. Sometimes used to symbolise the insidious influences of unbelieving relatives in distracting Christians to worldliness.

**Moon** A symbol in prophecy for derivative authority, the sun being the supreme source of heavenly rule, while the moon reflects its light. Thus the sun represents Christ and the moon the assembly. Also denounced as an object of idolatrous worship in Kings and Jeremiah.

**Moses** Leader sovereignly chosen by God, writer of the Pentateuch and giver of the Law. His name is often used where the law is alluded to, and he still represented the law on the mount of transfiguration, as Elias did the prophets.

**Myrrh** An aromatic gum, much prized as a perfume, and an ingredient in the holy anointing oil. Because of the difficulties involved in its extraction, symbolises the fragrant positive result of extreme pressure or exercise.

**Naked** An expression used often for a man without his outer mantle or cloak, as well as complete nudity. Used symbolically for natural or spiritual destitution.

**Naomi** Wife of Elimelech and mother-in-law to Ruth. Typically represents desolate Israel, as Ruth represents the despised but pious remnant, both depending on the goodness of the Kinsman-Redeemer.

**New birth** A term commonly used to convey the truth brought out to Nicodemus: anyone’s origin spiritually must be of God’s work in him. It is correctly translated “born anew” that is, not just again.

**Night** Used symbolically for (1) death, (2) moral darkness, (3) the period of Christ’s rejection

**North** Source of cold or severe testing, or left hand (see under east)

**Offerings** The sacrifices in the O.T. show the means of approach to God. The offerings can be classed as sweet-savour offerings, presented by worshippers, or sin-offerings, presented by repentant sinners seeking restoration as worshippers. The offerings generally are typical of the life or death of the Lord Jesus in various aspects, and it should be noted that it is difficult to summarise such a rich subject in a few words. Comments on the burnt, meat or meal, peace, sin, trespass, wave, heave and drink offerings follow

*Burnt* The burnt offering symbolises the devotion of the Lord Jesus in that He died in obeying His God and Father’s will, thus showing the extent of His love.

*Meat* J.N. Darby calls the meat offering of the Authorised Versionthe oblation. It was fine wheat flour, offered either raw or cooked in various ways. It does not involve death, and symbolises the holy humanity of Jesus in His life down here.

*Peace* The Peace offering symbolises communion, that is shared thoughts, joys and feelings. This exists in perfection between the Father and the son and characterises communion between believers and Divine Persons, and amongst believers.

*Sin/trespass* These offerings symbolise the death of the Lord Jesus for

our sins in a specific way, and as we take them up with God, restore souls to the enjoyment of communion with God and fellowship with those who may have been wronged. “Eating the sin-offering” involves consideration before God of His regard of the sin committed by another, rather than merely condemning him.

*Wave/heave* On some occasions certain portions of offered animals were waved or heaved before the Lord. The rabbis explain that the heave shoulder was moved up and down and the wave breast moved from side to side. The actions as done ‘before the Lord’ would seem to symbolise those who moved the offerings were really in His presence, with their hands filled with Christ.

Drink Wine offered with another offering. It may symbolise joy in the Spirit in the sense of the value of Christ’s work as done to God’s glory.

**Oil** Olive oil was much used by the Israelites as food, in the sacrifices, for anointing, and as a fuel for lamps. It is a type of the Holy Spirit.

**Omega** Last letter of the Greek alphabet: with Alpha, the first letter, descriptive of God as the beginning and end of all purpose concerning man.

# Omer Unit of capacity, 2400 ml. See weights and measures

# Oven The heat of the oven is used symbolically for rapid destruction.

**Pharisees** Name given to a religious school among the Jews, who prided themselves on their superior sanctity of life, devotion to God, and study of the law. They have much in common with ritualists, and the name has become a synonym for bigotry and formalism.

**Philistines** Descendants of Ham, a warlike people living in the southwest portion of the territory of Israel. They should have been dispossessed in Joshua’s time, but remained and were used by God in discipline on His people. They were idolaters, and represent the pretension and intrusion of natural man in the things of God. It is possible that the term is the origin of the name “Palestine”.

**Plumb line** A lump of lead, or some other weight on a string, used to test whether a building is perpendicular. Used symbolically as a standard of uprightness or exactness of judgment.

**Poetry** The books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Lamentations, and parts of the prophets are poetical. Hebrew poetry is not easy to define, as the ancient pronunciation has been lost, and it is therefore difficult to understand in what the rhythm consists. One marked style is the acrostic or alphabetical, where the poem has twenty-two lines, stanzas or sets of verses, each beginning with the Hebrew letters in order, as Psalms 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119,145, and also Proverbs 31:10-31 and Lamentations.

**Pomegranate** The fruit of a shrub common in Israel, along with vines and figs, and mentioned with them as brought back by those who searched out the land. Representations were used on the priest’s robes and on the columns of Solomon’s temple, as a type of fruitfulness.

**Praetorium** The court of the praetor or governor.

**Prophecy, prophet** The scriptural use of the term ‘prophecy’ is not at all confined to foretelling events, although this is included, but rather the revealing of God’s mind about any situation, whether past, present or future.

**Prophets, sons of** These are read of in the days of Samuel, Elijah and Elisha, who were held in repute by them. They were at times numerous, but often seem to typify a class of persons who are living in the shadow of past greatness, while not being in the full gain of God’s mind current at the time.

**Publican** Chief tax-gatherers in each Roman district, responsible for employing others to collect the Roman taxes. The system was bad, and open to abuse by collectors demanding more than they should. The obligation to pay Roman taxes was very objectionable to the Jews, who often classed ‘publicans and sinners’ together.

**Purple** A colour often mentioned with blue and scarlet in the tabernacle system. It represents *imperial* glory, as blue does *heavenly*, and scarlet *man’s* glory.

**Quicken** An obsolete word meaning to revive or bring to life. The ‘quick’ and the ‘dead’ are opposites.

**Rachel** Laban’s beautiful daughter, for whom Jacob served seven years. She represents Israel as God’s first love, but unfruitful in contrast to Leah, representing the Gentile bride, less attractive naturally.

**Rain** Israel differedfrom Egypt in that the water came as rain from heaven rather irrigation from the river. Except in times of drought due to God’s judgment, the ‘early rain’ fell at seed sowing time, about October and the ‘latter rain’ in Spring, about February. Rain was thus predictable in wet seasons, and did not fall in every month as in our climate.

**Rebecca** Type of the saints as bride of Christ being led on their journey by the Holy Spirit to be wife of the Risen One.

**Reprobate** The modern meaning is “abandoned to sin, depraved”, and this is also the scriptural sense. The word was originally used to describe unrefined silver, or dross produced after refining, with which God’s ancient people are compared in their moral debasement.

**Sadducees** An exclusive sect of the Jews who did not believe in the resurrection, angels, or spirits. The Lord Jesus denounced them as “offspring of vipers” and said to them “Ye greatly err, not knowing the scriptures or the power of God.” The rulers of the Jews and high priests at the time the Lord was on earth were Sadducees. They were much more exclusive than the Pharisees.

**Salt** A symbol of moral savour and thus a preservative.

#### Samaria In the Old Testament this refers to the city built by Omri, Ahab’s father, which later became the capital of Israel, the kingdom of the ten tribes. In the New Testament it refers to a much larger area, corresponding roughly to the portions of Manasseh and Ephraim.

**Samaritans** In the Lord’s time on earth He countered the revulsion the Jews had for these people, as in the parable of the Good Samaritan, the cleansed leper, and the woman in John 4; they are also mentioned in Acts 8. However their origin is given in 2 Kings 17:24-41, where they are described as fearing Jehovah but at the same time continuing in idolatry. Ezra also prevented them from having any part in rebuilding the temple. Thus in the Old Testament they represent persons having no title to a place of promise, requiring to be excluded as polluted; but in the New, as recognising this lack of title, those appreciating Divine grace and coming into the good of it in spite of opposition from religious orthodoxy.

**Scrip (Matt. 10:10)** An obsolete word meaning a large wallet or purse usually made from the skin of a small animal such as a kid, more or less similar to a duffel bag. It has nothing to do with writing or certificates for bank stock.

**Seah** Unit of capacity, corresponding to 8 litres. See under weights and measures.

**Seraph, seraphim** Symbolical heavenly beings seen by Isaiah. The Hebrew word has been interpreted as ‘exalted ones’. The distinction between seraphim and cherubim may be that the former bear witness to God’s holiness, while the latter show the principles of His righteous government on earth. The ‘living creatures’ in Revelation 4 combine characteristics of both.

**Seven assemblies** The addresses to the seven assemblies in the first two chapters of Revelation show features representing the church in its progress through the ages, seven symbolising completeness. ***Ephesus*** symbolises the early church declining after the departure of the wise master-builder. ***Smyrna*** symbolises the time of persecution under Nero and Diocletian. ***Pergamos*** symbolises the stage under Constantine when many professing but unreal persons were drawn in as nominal Christians. These first three are past – the last four continue to the end. ***Thyatira*** symbolises Roman Catholicism, particularly in the period when it predominated in corruption. ***Sardis*** symbolises Protestantism after it had lost its early spiritual power and become worldly. ***Philadelphia*** represents latter church history on the part of those who stand morally in faithfulness to the Lord Himself. ***Laodicea*** has been described as representing the arrogance of rationalism and higher criticism of the nineteenth century, but it can also symbolise any group of Christians who are self-satisfied and unaware of their distance from the Lord.

# SheolA vague O.T. term to describe the place of spirits of departed persons, without distinguishing good or evil. It does not therefore correspond to either heaven or hell.

# South Generally that part of the territory of Israel belonging to Judah and Simeon. Because the sun is at its hottest at midday, signifies warmth as north signifies cold. Also can mean “right hand” because Israelites always considered the points of the compass when facing the East.

# Stones Precious stones as the most costly things on earth typify the graces of Christ as reflected in His saints. Memorial stones as monoliths or heaps of stones were often raised to commemorate an event or witness a covenant. Metaphorically stones represent hardness, strength and firmness.

**Synagogue** The Hebrew word means a congregation, gathering or place of assembly. In New Testament times, it means a building used by the Jews on the Sabbath for reading scripture, exposition and prayers. Paul also speaks of beating believers in them, which is a very undignified use for a place of worship.

**Talent** Unit of weight, believed to be 46.68 Kg. See under weights and measures

**Temper** To mix, compound, or blend, as in untempered mortar,

**Temple** This word has various meanings depending on the context. In modern brethren’s language, probably in reference to Luke 2:46, where the Lord heard and answered questions, it means a **reading meeting**. Originally the word meant the building used for the service of God by the Israelites, where the sacrifices were carried out. **Solomon’s temple** was patterned on the tabernacle as used in the wilderness: the Chaldeans destroyed it. The returning captives built **Zerubbabel’s temple**. It was greatly enlarged as **Herod’s temple**, which is the one commented on by the disciples in the gospels, and would have been destroyed by the Romans in 70AD. Scripture speaks also of a **future temple**, built by Jews in unbelief, which should not be confounded with **Ezekiel’s temple**, which will be built when the land is again divided amongst the twelve tribes brought into blessing. Christ referred to **His** **body as a temple** in John 2:19, and **Christians** are now **God’s temple**, indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The **body** of each Christian is also spoken of as **temple of the Holy Ghost**.

**Trees** See under wood.

**Unction** Connected with anointing or ointment. “The Unction” is a term used to mean the Holy Spirit who permeates the whole being of the believer to give him Christ’s character.

**Urim and Thummim** Hebrew words meaning “lights” and “perfections”. There is no record of their construction or form, or even if they were material, but it is clear that God answered questions by means of Urim and Thummim. Moses put them on Aaron’s breastplate, but it would appear from the books of Ezra and Nehemiah that they were not present in their day.

**Usury** An obsolete word for loan interest, the charging of which was forbidden in the Mosaic law.

**Winnowing fan** Tool for separating chaff or husks from grain. Used symbolically for the judgments of God, and also for the discriminating power of the testimony of the Lord Jesus.

**Wood** *Almond* As it is usually the first tree to blossom after winter, and a cut

twig has remarkable ability to remain live and take root and grow if put into the ground, it is therefore an apt type of Christ in resurrection.

*Cedar* Symbolises what Christ is in relation to divine purpose: it is

used as a symbol of strength and stability.

*Gopher* wood was used by Noah to build the ark: it symbolises that kind of humanity in Christ having its counterpart in us which would preserve what is of God and save it from death.

*Myrtle* Because of its use to make the booths at the feast thus named, typifies peace and blessing.

*Olive* This wood was especially suited to carving: it was used to make the folding doors into the temple.

*Palm* This tree is an emblem of fertility as many have been known to yield 50 Kg of dates yearly for 70 years. Palm-branches are a token of rest and peace after sorrow.

*Shittim(acacia)* Much used in the tabernacle system. Because of its durability it symbolises the humanity of Christ as seen in meeting things down here, or ability in the Christian to overcome in difficult circumstances

*Unspecified* wood used by Abraham on which to offer up Isaac speaks of the humanity of Christ in taking on the condition to which judgment could apply.

*Terebinth* A resinous tree from which turpentine is obtained.

*Thyine* Mentioned in Rev. 18:12, probably a wood used for decoration, perhaps what is now called the African conifer.

*Willow* Originally a symbol of joy, being used at the Feast of Tabernacles: after the captivity as a symbol of sorrow, being spoken of prophetically in Psalm 137:2.

**Yoke** A beam used to fasten together two animals to pull a wagon or implement; or a shoulder piece to allow carrying loads on either side. A symbol of servitude or slavery, but also a means of spreading the burden.

**Zion** A part of Jerusalem, often called the ‘city of David’ – it was where he lived. The term constantly has a metaphorical sense in scripture. In the prophets, Zion is referred to as the seat of Messiah’s royal power on earth. Because the ark was brought to Zion, it may have been regarded as the centre of blessing, or as a source from which blessing proceeded.